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## THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

### VI. ATONEMENT IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS

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Were it not that the limitations of space forbid it, it would be wise to begin our study of Jesus' teaching concerning atonement<sup>1</sup> with a careful survey of his thought about sin and God's attitude toward it, and about sacrifice and the temple. We must content ourselves, however, with brief statements on these points, and pass on to that which has more strictly to do with our subject, Jesus' teaching concerning his own death, his attitude in the presence of death, and his express statements concerning the conditions of divine forgiveness.

Jesus clearly recognized the fact of alienation between God and man and found the cause of it in human sin. He gave no formal definition of sin, but especially in the teaching which is recorded in the synoptic gospels clearly meant by sins those evil deeds both of heart and life, inward and outward, which men commit and the committal of which creates evil character and other evil consequences. See especially Mark 7:15-23. These sins so separate between God and man that persisted in they cause eternal alienation from God and the everlasting ruin of the sinner (Mark 3:28, 29).

Toward the sacrifices of the temple Jesus' attitude was that of toleration. Though not opposing them, he ascribed to them no intrinsic value as a means of reconciling God and man. He taught explicitly that they had no such value in the case of a man who having wronged his fellow-men had not made peace with him (Matt. 5:23, 24), and never pointed men to them as a means through which they

<sup>1</sup> The word "atonement" does not occur in the gospels at all. Elsewhere in the New Testament it is found in the A. V. of Rom. 5:11 only, where the Greek word is *καταλλαγή*. This word found also in Rom. 11:15; II Cor. 5:18, 19 is always translated in R. V. by "reconciliation." It is the idea expressed by this word in reference to relations between God and man with which these articles deal. Whether the word occurs in a given teacher or writer is of minor consequence. Concerning the word "forgiveness," which is Jesus' common term, see below pp. 430-32.

might come into right relations with God. His cleansing of the temple was not an expression of zeal for the sacrifices. On the contrary, it was a defense of the rights of those who came there not to sacrifice, but only to worship, as against those who permitted the Court of the Gentiles to be used as a market-place for sacrificial animals. His participation in the Passover ritual shows that he was not opposed to sacrifice as such, but furnishes no evidence that he thought of the Passover lamb as having expiatory or propitiatory value.

The earliest recorded clear statement of Jesus concerning his death is that found in Mark 8:31 ff.:

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake the saying openly: And Peter took him and began to rebuke him. But he turning about and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou thinkest not the thoughts of God, but the thoughts of men. And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it.

For our present purpose three things are most significant in this statement of Jesus: (a) At the time of this utterance Jesus foresaw that he would be brought to his death by the opposition of the Jewish leaders. (b) The fact that Peter's protest against the thought of death was for him a temptation to be repelled, suggests that he could have escaped it; that he was to die because of the opposition of the Jewish leaders suggests how he could have escaped it, viz., by conforming in a measure to their ideas. But this is the thought of men, not of God. Fidelity to God's thought demands that he go forward unflinchingly, though death awaits him along that path. (c) What is happening to him is not something exceptional. All his disciples must follow in the same path, not, indeed, necessarily of death at the hands of the Jews, but of readiness to die if fidelity to the will of God involve death. Like himself they must deny themselves and take up the cross, and he who takes up his cross, though he may not die upon it, has in spirit and intent laid down his life.

Thus Jesus evidently looks forward to his death as the inevitable result of fidelity to the work that was given him to do; the working-

out in his life, under the conditions imposed upon him, of the principle which it is the common duty of himself and his disciples to accept and follow even unto death.

The second passage of capital importance is Mark 10:45. The sons of Zebedee had asked for seats at the right hand and the left in his glory. And Jesus had told them that they should indeed share in his sufferings, drink the cup that he drank, and be baptized with his baptism, but that to sit on his right hand and on his left was not his to give. And when the ten heard it and were displeased,

Jesus called them to him and saith to them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you; but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister, and whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all. For verily (*καί*=also, even) the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

The context here also is of great significance. Jesus laid down as the principle in accordance with which his disciples must live that true greatness is greatness in service. The leader must be servant of all. And this principle he enforces by the statement that it is the principle of his life also, and that he carries it even to the point of giving his life a ransom for many.<sup>2</sup>

The expression "to give his life" (*δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ*) is in itself capable of, or at least suggests, two meanings according as the word "life" is taken (1) in its physical sense, meaning that which constitutes one a living being, the loss of which is death, or (2) in the broader sense, meaning the soul as endowed with energy, power, self-direction, hence in effect one's life-energies. In the former case the phrase means "to surrender one's life, to die," in the latter case "to devote one's self, one's energies," involving no doubt death itself as a possibility, yet only as an incident of the self-devotion; essential in spirit, but not in fact. The similar expression *τίθῃμι ψυχὴν* probably has the former meaning in John 10:15, 17. But in the

<sup>2</sup> It has indeed been questioned whether these words are those of Jesus, and not rather a comment of the evangelist. But the uniform habit of this evangelist to use the term "Son of Man" only in words of Jesus, together with the fact that the occurrence of the passage in Matthew is against its being an addition to the original Mark, makes it highly improbable that the words are here an editorial comment. I believe we are quite justified in treating them as an utterance of Jesus.

only example which I have discovered of precisely the expression employed in Mark, it bears the second meaning:

And the days of Mattathias drew near that he should die, and he said unto his sons, Now have pride and rebuke gotten strength, and a season of overthrow and wrath of indignation. And now, my children, be ye zealous for the law and give your lives (*δότε τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν*) for the covenant of your fathers. And call to remembrance the deeds of our fathers which they did in their generations (I Macc. 2:50 f.).

And then follows a list of the faithful fathers, no one of whom died for his faith. Mattathias, moreover, it is to be remembered, died a natural death, having devoted his life unto death (but not strictly speaking in death) to the defense of the law and the covenant of the fathers.

The word here translated "ransom" (*λύτρον*) is found in classical writers from Herodotus and Pindar<sup>3</sup> down, and is used in three senses (1) "a money price paid to secure the release of one who is in captivity or bondage," (2) "anything by which one may avert the vengeance of the gods for a crime committed," (3) "a recompense, requital, offset." In the Septuagint the verb *λυτροῶ* is used of release effected in any way whatever; *λύτρον* with one exception denotes a money price. This one exception is Num. 3:12, where the Septuagint uses this word in the statement that the Levites shall be the ransoms for the first-born, meaning that God will accept the life-service of the Levites instead of that of the first-born sons of the nation.<sup>4</sup> There is no instance in which the word is used of a life given in death. The verb is used not infrequently in the later Jewish books in the general sense "to deliver." But I have found no examples of the noun.<sup>5</sup>

The preposition "for" (*ἅντι*) in the phrase "for many" calls for no extended discussion. A reference to any lexicon will show that

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Pindar, *C. T.* 7, 141; Aesch. *Chor.* 48; Plat. *Rep.* 393 D.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Biblical World* for March, 1908, p. 214.

<sup>5</sup> Mention ought also to be made in this connection of the passages in IV Maccabees discussed in a previous article (April issue, p. 283), where the word *ἀντίψυχον* is used. If it be supposed that the two words are synonymous, the Maccabean passage would perhaps suggest that Jesus looked upon the giving of his life in death as so satisfying the necessity for revelation of the divine attitude toward the sin of the nation that it constituted for the nation a means of deliverance from death. But there is no direct evidence that Jesus had this passage in mind, still less that he meant to express by his

it is used much like the English "for" in a variety of senses, and in particular may mean either "instead of" (Luke 11:11), or "for the sake of, to obtain the release of" (Matt. 17:27).

Combining these various lines of evidence, (a) the context in which Jesus is impressing upon his disciples the necessity that they who would be leaders must give themselves in service to others, and follows this instruction by an appeal to his own example, (b) the usage of the words and phrases, "to give life," "ransom," "for," (c) the implication of the word "ransom" that the many are in some state from which release is desirable, we reach this as the most probable meaning of Jesus' words: the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and without reserve to devote his life, even if need be unto death, that by so doing he might release many from the bondage or misery in which they are held. This also, his disciples ought to do for others.

Though no express mention is made of that from which men are to be released the general tenor of Jesus' teaching and attitude toward life leaves no room for doubt that he has in mind the sins of men and their consequences. It is easy to go beyond this and to read between the lines various definitions of the precise relation between Jesus' own devotion of himself to service even to death and the deliverance of men. But we are probably truest to his thought when we rest simply in that which the passage clearly expresses, viz., that he gave his whole life-energies that he might deliver men from the bondage and consequences of their sins; adding only that the context implies that in this he was fulfilling a universal human duty—for he demanded the same of his disciples—and that the passage already examined, Mark 8:31 ff., suggests that such self-devotion issued in his case in a violent death because of the implacable hostility of the Jewish leaders to him and his unflinching fidelity to this very duty. His death is the consummate expression of his life. The passage is thus, despite the great difference in setting and terminology, at one with Isa., chap. 53, in teaching the great principle of vicarious suffering.

word not only the idea of *ἀντὶ ψυχῶν* in IV Maccabees but also the suggestions of the context. Indeed, it is not at all certain that IV Maccabees was written before the time of Jesus. All that this passage respecting the Jewish martyrs can do for us, therefore, is to bear witness to the existence of certain ideas concerning the significance of martyrdom as current approximately in the days of Jesus.

The mission of the good is to serve their fellow-men, suffering if occasion require for the wicked. This universal law finds its pre-eminent exemplification in the life and death of the Son of man.

A third passage of great importance is Mark 14:24:

And he said unto them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many.<sup>6</sup>

The language concerning the blood of the covenant seems to be based on Exod. 24:6-8. As God there made a covenant with Israel sealed with blood, so Jesus seals with his blood a covenant<sup>7</sup> between God and men represented in the person of the disciples. On the occasion of the ratification of the covenant between Jehovah and his people, to this effect that they would keep the law of God, peace-offerings and burnt-offerings were offered. And Moses divided the blood into two parts, half he sprinkled on the altar and half, when the people had heard and accepted the covenant, he sprinkled on the people. That the people may solemnly express the devotion of their lives to God without giving them up in death, an animal is slain and the blood which symbolizes their lives, sprinkled upon the altar to indicate the giving of their life to God. On the other hand, when they have pledged themselves to keep God's covenant, the other half of the blood representing the life of God is sprinkled on the people to signify the giving of his life to them. Thus the people and their God are bound together in a mutual life-covenant, according to which they are to devote their lives to him in keeping his law and he is to be their God.

But the use of the word "poured out" or "shed" (*ἐκχυννόμενον*) in Mark 14:24, for which there is no corresponding term in Exod. 24, suggests the possibility that Jesus had in mind something beside this passage. Two explanations are possible. The verb used in the gospel is never employed in the Septuagint of the killing of a sacrifice,

<sup>6</sup> Matt. 26:28 adds the words "for the remission of sins," *εἰς ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν* and Luke 22:20 speaks of the covenant as new. Both these variations from the Mark form are probably interpretative additions, correctly interpreting Jesus' thought, but not otherwise to be taken into account in the study of the teaching of Jesus. It is therefore unnecessary at this point to discuss the question whether Luke 22:19b, 20 is an original part of the Luke text or an addition from I Cor. 11:24.

<sup>7</sup> There is perhaps also a tacit reference to the new covenant of Jer. 31:33, though this is clearer in reference to the Pauline account in Luke 22:19b, 20 than in the original synoptic account.

but is used (*a*) of the shedding of blood in murder (Gen. 9:6) and (*b*) of the pouring out of the blood of the sacrifice at the base of the altar. This is spoken of, e. g., in the consecration of Aaron and his sons (Exod. 21:12), where it apparently signified the devotion of their lives to the service of God; and in connection with the sin-offering (Lev. 4:7, 12, 18, etc.), but not in reference to any other sacrifice. The use of this word in this connection therefore suggests either the violent character of Jesus' death, or an association of it with the sin-offering. In the former case it conveys no implication as to the meaning of his death. In the latter case the parallelism cannot be too hard pressed, since of course there was no act after his death strictly corresponding to the pouring-out of the blood of the sacrificial animal at the base of the altar; it can only suggest that his death was one of the steps in the divine plan for bringing to men the forgiveness of their sins. (Cf. March issue, p. 212.) It is the latter interpretation which was adopted by the first evangelist and expressed in the added words "for the forgiveness of sins." If we accept this view as on the whole more probable, the language of Jesus combines a reference to the burnt-offering and peace-offering, by which the covenant between God and Israel was ratified, with a reference to the sin-offering, in which the poured-out blood symbolized the self-devotion of the offerer to God, through which atonement was made and his sin forgiven. In either case the expression "on behalf of many" indicates that the suffering and death of Jesus were vicarious and endured to accomplish something for men. That that something pertained to their relation to God and was therefore essentially atoning, in the proper sense of the word, we are assured not only by the whole work and spirit of Jesus, but in particular by his reference to the covenant. In neither case do the words in themselves or through the implication of the Old Testament passages which they suggest express the idea of atonement through vicarious endurance of penalty. The death of Jesus is on behalf of men, that they may come into covenant relation with God. To this the word *ἐκχυννόμενον* adds either the suggestion that this death is a violent death, or that as the death of the sacrificial animal is necessary to the obtaining of the blood by which a covenant with God was symbolized, so it is at cost of his death that Jesus brings men into the covenant with God.



But we have still to ask what is the significance of the fact that the disciples drink the wine which is the symbol of Christ's blood? If drinking means only what sprinkling means in the covenant-making to which the language contains a reference, then it implies the impartation to them of the life of God, which is indeed the essence of the covenant. But it seems evident that it means more than this. In the drinking they are active. It can hardly signify less, therefore, than that they accept the covenant and for themselves ratify it. But not even this seems quite to satisfy the meaning of the act. That which they drink is the symbol of Jesus' life, not, we must believe, that physical life that he was surrendering, but that ethical life which he was expressing in shedding his blood. To drink this symbol of his life is to accept for themselves that ethical life, that principle of life, which was that of Jesus, the principle which he had laid down months before when he told his disciples that if any man would come after him he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow him. Possibly we are in this suggestion going beyond what is distinctly implied in these words. But we are certainly not exceeding the limits of Jesus' thought as elsewhere clearly expressed, and can hardly be wrong in finding in the words at the supper a re-expression of the previously expressed thought.

By his language at the last supper, then, Jesus taught his disciples that he was giving his life to the end that a covenant of peace might be ratified between God and many men. He dies not that his death may furnish the physical blood for a covenant ceremony—for there was no such ceremony—but that he may bring about in very fact that which was symbolically accomplished when Moses in the wilderness sealed with the blood of animals the covenant between Jehovah and the people. This is essentially the idea of Isaiah, chap. 53. With this is perhaps associated also the thought that such covenant relation of God with sinful men involves confession of sin on man's part and forgiveness on God's part. It is in any case distinctly implied that the spirit which Jesus exemplifies in his death must be the spirit and principle of his disciples, and there is no suggestion that this death is of value save to such as thus accept as theirs the life-principle of Jesus.

There remain two passages in the synoptic gospels which call for brief discussion.

Luke 22:37. For I say to you that this which is written must be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned with lawless men: for that which concerneth me hath fulfilment.

Luke 24:25, 26. O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?

Into the critical and exegetical problems which these passages present it will not be necessary to enter here. It is sufficient to say that taking the passages as they stand they indicate that Jesus found in the Old Testament certain ideals of life and conduct which he felt it needful for him to follow and which involved for him a death at the hands of his opponents. This fact, and the nature of those ideals we have already discovered in the other passages which we have examined, in which we have also discovered that Jesus looked upon these ideals as of universal application and obligation.

But the thought of Jesus about the meaning of his death is conveyed not only in express teaching concerning it, but in his attitude in the presence of it. One of the passages already discussed, Mark 8:31 ff., is the first to demand our consideration under this head also. Jesus having predicted his rejection by the Jews, and his death in consequence, and Peter having strongly rejected this thought, Jesus turns on him with the words: "Get thee behind me Satan, Thou thinkest not the thoughts of God but those of men." The word "Satan" indicates that to Jesus Peter was at that moment a tempter. And this signifies in turn that the thought that Peter presented was one that appealed to Jesus, but which he instantly recognized and put away as not in accordance with God's thought. And this means that the death that he had predicted was repulsive to him, that he shrank from it, that his facing it was a matter of courageous devotion to duty, not a choice of that which was agreeable.

This attitude Jesus maintained to the end; his feeling of repugnance for death only grew more intense as he drew nearer to it. It is expressed again in the prayer in Gethsemane:

Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt (Mark 14:36).

Here as before there is evident the shrinking with horror from death, and yet the resolute going forward to death. Only, as it draws nearer, there springs up the hope that possibly he may escape it consistently with God's will. But this he sees is not to be, and he goes forward unflinchingly to his death.

This horror of death cannot be the mere dread of physical pain, or of the act of dissolution. Many a hard-hearted criminal has faced death with a calmness and an indifference which are wholly lacking in Jesus. Many a martyr has gone to the stake with songs of triumph on his lips, and with a positive exultation in his fate which made him almost indifferent to pain. But Jesus cannot die thus. The only credible answer to the question, why is this so, is found in the language in which he first speaks of his death distinctly. He is to die rejected by his people. His death is the culmination of his nation's hostility to God his Father. All this is too terrible to him, too full of horror to permit either the calm indifference of the man to whom sin is no evil, or the exulting joy of the martyr. This dread of death, this pain under the sense of what death means to him reaches its climax in the experience of the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" These words are from the Twenty-second Psalm, which portrays the experience of a godly man who is suffering most keenly at the hands of his foes and cannot understand how the righteous God can permit it, how the God who loves him can thus apparently leave him in the hands of his enemies. The language is that of deep perplexity, of a soul which can put no other interpretation upon the facts than that God has forgotten him; yet in the midst of these facts he refuses to surrender his faith in God, and in the same words in which he expresses his perplexity and boldly puts upon the events the interpretation which seems to him the only possible one, expresses also his faith in God: "*My God, my God.*" In the latter part of the psalm he issues from the storm into the calmness of quiet trust. But the first part expresses as real a faith as the latter. For there is no stronger faith than that of him who clings to God in the face of what seems to him convincing evidence that God has forgotten him. It is certainly fair to presume that the words on Jesus' lips have the meaning which they bear in the psalm. He, too, in the midst of sufferings which perhaps cloud his

intellectual clearness, and certainly seem to him to mean that God has deserted him to his enemies, he, too, refuses to doubt God, and clings to him still in the words, "*My God, my God!*" And, as in the case of the psalmist, so in his case also, after the storm there ensues the calm, and he yields up his spirit with the calm and trustful words: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

The attitude of Jesus toward his death is then consistent throughout. It is to him the dreadful result of human sin, from which, because it is this, he shrinks with horror, but to which, because it is necessary in order that men may be delivered from sin, and therefore is for him God's will, he unflinchingly goes forward.

It thus appears also that Jesus looked upon his suffering and death as vicarious, endured for others and for their deliverance. Yet it must also be observed that in his teaching as recorded in the oldest records of his teaching he never definitely made it the basis of the forgiveness of sins.<sup>8</sup>

It remains therefore for us to ask what he taught expressly concerning forgiveness. The essential elements of his teaching are found in the following passages:

That ye may know that the Son of Man hath authority on earth to forgive sins . . . (Mark 2:10).

Verily I say unto you, All their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme: but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin. (Mark 3:28, 29.)

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. (Luke 7:27; cf. 48-50.)

Think ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered these things? I tell you Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish. (Luke 13:2, 3; cf. 4, 5.)

And he spake this parable: A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit thereon, and found none. And he said unto the vinedresser, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why doth it also cumber the ground? And he answering saith unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it: and if it bear fruit henceforth, well; but if not, thou shalt cut it down. (Luke 13:6-9.)

But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes

<sup>8</sup> On Matt. 26:28, cf. above, pp. 425 f.

unto heaven, but smote his breast saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted (Luke 18:13, 14).

And Jesus said unto him, Today is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham (Luke 19:9).

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matt. 6:14, 15.)

To these passages should also be added, Matt. 18:21-35, and Luke, chap. 15, which though of capital importance are not printed because of their length and familiarity.

The usual words for "forgive" (*ἀφίημι*) and "forgiveness" (*ἄφεσις*) as employed in reference to sin are undoubtedly taken from the legal vocabulary of the time, and refer to remission of, or forbearing to enforce, a debt or penalty. To forgive a sinner is to forbear to punish him, or not to enforce a claim against him. To forgive sins is to remit the penalty which would otherwise be enforced. Yet it is evident that the term as used by Jesus transcends the limits of the strictly legal sense. The parable of the prodigal son, to cite but one example, indicates that the repentant sinner is not simply released from punishment, but positively received into the fellowship and favor of his father.

Of the condition of forgiveness there is in the teaching of Jesus in the synoptic gospels a fourfold statement. It is sometimes said to be repentance, sometimes faith, sometimes love of Christ, sometimes forgiveness of others. Yet this fourfoldness is only apparent. There is in fact but one condition. Repentance involves, on the one side, a turning-away from the sin in which one has been living and, on the other, the beginning to live in a new and right way. That repentance in this sense is a condition of forgiveness, has its obvious ground in the fact that only when one has given over sin and turned toward righteousness can the righteous Father look upon the sinner with approval. And this in turn suggests what is also suggested by the variety of the conditions of forgiveness named in different passages, that forgiveness, involving the reception of the sinner into the fellowship and favor of God, is of necessity conditioned on the sinner himself becoming essentially right. Such essential righteousness

may express itself in, and be shown to exist by, repentance, faith toward Jesus, or love for him, or the forgiveness of others.

The nature of forgiveness and the essentially ethical character of its condition are further indicated by the fact that the forgiveness which men are required to exercise toward their fellow-men is not the ignoring of wrong unrepented of, but the passing-over of the wrong which the wrongdoer has abjured. Men are never enjoined by Jesus to "forgive" unrepentant wrongdoers. "If thy brother sin, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him; and if he sin against thee seven times in a day and seven times turn again and say, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." God himself offers no forgiveness to the unrepentant or the unforgiving; neither does he ask of men that they shall forgive the unrepentant. *Forbearance* toward the unrepentant sinner God exercises, and bids men exercise, but not *forgiveness*.

This also makes it clear why there is a sin which hath no forgiveness. The sin itself is apparently the assumption of an attitude of hostility toward truth, the speaking against the Spirit of God himself. This attitude, Jesus conceived, may itself become fixed, an eternal sin, and hence intrinsically unforgivable. Forgiveness of sin still continuing is for a holy being a moral contradiction.

It thus appears that, according to the teaching of Jesus, the condition of divine forgiveness is distinctly ethical. God approves and receives into fellowship not the man who has never sinned (of such Jesus knows none) and not the unrepentant sinner, but the sinner who with full purpose of heart turns from his sin to live righteously. Of a condition of forgiveness outside the man himself Jesus never speaks. His own suffering and death are effective in bringing about forgiveness because in them he exemplifies that relation to God and to men which God approves. Its significance in relation to forgiveness is in the revelation of the conditions of obtaining divine approval. But he alone is forgiven, received into divine approval, who appropriating this revelation fulfils the ethical condition therein revealed.

[“The Teaching of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel” will be discussed in the July issue.]